

A New International Policy for the U.S. Department of Education
November 2002

PART II: Overview of Current, Planned, and Possible New Programs and Activities

Abstract: Part I of this document is a new *international policy statement* for the U.S. Department of Education. The following pages, organized according to the four policy priorities defined in the policy statement, summarize the Department's *existing efforts* in international education, describe *planned activities*, and propose *new initiatives*, which could be designed and carried out in cooperation with partners in the public and private sectors. *This document does not constitute a strategic plan for the Department's international activities, but rather a review of the current situation and a menu of ideas to stimulate discussion on the extent, direction, and limits of the Department's international role.*

The Four Policy Priorities are abbreviated here as:

1. Increase U.S. Knowledge and Expertise
2. Information Sharing, Leadership, and Joint Initiatives
3. Learn from Abroad to Improve U.S. Education
4. Support U.S. Foreign and Economic Policy

Policy Priority 1. Increase U.S. Knowledge and Expertise

It is the policy of the Department of Education to support and expand U.S. efforts to increase knowledge and expertise about other world regions and cultures, other languages, and international issues.

Existing Programs and Activities

The *Civics Education* program, authorized by Title II, Part C, Subpart 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, as reauthorized by the *No Child Left Behind Act*), is administered by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement¹ (OERI). This program includes cooperative projects with emerging democracies. The Office of English Language Acquisition administers the *Foreign Language Assistance Program* (ESEA Title V, Part D, Subpart 9), which supports the teaching and learning of foreign languages in elementary and secondary schools.

The Department's *International Education and Graduate Programs Service (IEGPS)*, in the Office of Postsecondary Education, administers programs to strengthen and improve undergraduate and graduate instruction in foreign languages, area studies, and international business with an emphasis on less commonly taught languages and world regions. Under Title VI of the Higher Education Act, IEGPS administers 118 National

¹ Under pending reorganization, responsibility for this program will transfer to a new Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

Resource Centers (NRCs) that provide services to K-12 and two- and four-year institutions in language instruction and curricula concerning foreign cultures. Fourteen Language Resource Centers (LRCs) offer a variety of foreign language training programs tailored specifically for K-12 teachers. In addition, 32 Centers for International Business Education (CIBEs) at schools of business provide support for curriculum development, research, and training on issues of importance to US trade and competitiveness. These Centers also have developed programs and partnerships with local schools and school districts designed to introduce students and teachers to the international economy and business practices. Outreach programs at these centers serve several thousand school teachers each year. Anecdotal evidence indicates that demand for such programs and services could be much higher.

IEGPS also administers programs under the Fulbright-Hays Act that provide opportunities for K-12 educators, as well as postsecondary faculty and students, to travel, study, and conduct research overseas. Programs such as *Seminars Abroad* and *Group Projects Abroad*, plus others, annually support over 400 K-12 teachers and over 500 postsecondary faculty and students to learn about Eastern European and Non-Western countries and to study critical and less commonly taught languages.

The *Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)* provides funding for innovative international projects from the field in such areas as on-line foreign language learning and web-based clearinghouses for international issues. In cooperation with partner countries, FIPSE also funds the development of innovative *international consortia* of postsecondary institutions, to promote student and faculty mobility and joint curriculum development in higher education. Current consortium programs include the U.S.-European Union, North America (US-Canada-Mexico), and US-Brazil programs.

The Office of *Federal Student Aid (FSA)* plays an important role in facilitating international exchange through loans to American students for study abroad, monitoring the expenditure of federal funds abroad, and working to ensure that overseas host institutions meet the necessary standards to participate in federal student financial assistance programs. The *National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA)*, a panel of medical experts appointed by the Secretary of Education, plays a critical role for U.S. students who wish to receive federal loans to study medicine abroad. At a country's request, the NCFMEA reviews the standards used by that country to accredit its medical schools, and if the NCFMEA determines that those standards are comparable to the standards used to accredit U.S. medical schools, then accredited medical schools in that country may apply to participate in the federal student loan program.

To ensure that the various study, research, exchange, and professional development programs offered by the federal government do not duplicate one another, the Department is an active member of the *Interagency Working Group on U.S. Government Training and Exchanges (IAWG)*.

In sum, several existing programs invest in the development of international expertise at the K-12 and postsecondary levels, in school/university partnerships, and in opportunities for students and educators to benefit from international experiences and language training. **However, the United States has not sought in a systematic way to promote learning about other regions or international issues in U.S. schools or to promote international opportunities for U.S. K-12 educators.** Moreover, at current funding levels, Department programs are unable to meet the country's urgent near- and long-term educational, economic, and national security needs for increased international and language competencies.

Of the four policy priorities, this is the one for which the need is estimated to be greatest and in which a new ED initiative could have the most impact. Potential partners include the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the National Coalition on Asia and International Studies in the Schools, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Education Commission of the States, school principals' associations, American Council on Education, Coalition for International Education, Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, and many others.

Recent and Already Planned Activities

The Department is already planning some major new events and activities to highlight the significance of international education. For example:

- At the Department of Education's recommendation, the U.S. Department of State joined other nations to vote "yes" on establishing the *International Literacy Decade*. The Department of Education joined the International Literacy Network (ILN) and UNESCO in celebrating *International Literacy Day 2002* at the United Nations on September 5.
- The Department sponsored the *Embassy Forum on World Languages and International Studies* on September 23-24, bringing state foreign language and international studies coordinators representing 38 states together with foreign embassy and non-governmental organization representatives in Washington, to learn about available resources such as teacher and student exchanges, learning materials about other countries, and classroom-to-classroom curriculum projects.
- The Departments of Education and State will join in sponsoring the third annual celebration of *International Education Week* from November 18-22. Secretary Paige is sending a letter to each Governor, school principal, and university president in the country, inviting them to participate in International Education Week and suggesting concrete ways they can become involved. The State Department has contacted all US embassies abroad encouraging Ambassadors and other officials to visit local schools and highlight education issues during the week. The Department also plans to sponsor other events in partnership with the

Smithsonian Institution, the government of the United Kingdom, the Peace Corps, and others.

- The Department will be a partner in the *National Coalition on Asia and International Studies in the Schools*, a joint initiative of some 30 organizations led by the Asia Society, Education Commission of the States, Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National Governors Association. The Coalition seeks to expand and improve the teaching and learning of world regions, world languages, and international issues in America's schools. A kickoff meeting was held May 29; the second meeting will be held in conjunction with the first "States Institute for International Studies" during International Education Week.
- The *Friendship Through Education Consortium*, a White House initiative funded by the Department of Education and implemented through a partnership of several non-governmental organizations, is facilitating expanded teacher, student, and classroom exchanges around the world. The initial emphasis is on building educational contacts between U.S. schools and schools in predominantly Muslim countries. Partnering organizations help to identify appropriate school sites, provide safe and secure Internet connections, assist in translating materials, and facilitate classroom projects.
- The Department is coordinating content and structural development of an educational web resource entitled *Learning About Each Other* on behalf of the Education Network (EDNET) of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). The website focuses on increasing knowledge of the people and places of the Pacific Rim and building mutual understanding by engaging teachers and middle school-aged students in active, joint, standards-based learning activities.

Proposed/Possible New Initiatives:

A. Proposals requiring no new authority and little or no additional funding:

- **Secretary Paige could deliver a major address during International Education Week 2002** (November 18-22), declaring the federal government's intent to encourage and support teaching about other countries, cultures, languages, and international studies in US classrooms, and announcing the Education Department's new international policy. An event including the President and/or Secretary Powell as well as Secretary Paige should be considered.
- **Create a Secretary's (or President's) award** to recognize outstanding work by educators to increase understanding of world issues and other countries, cultures, and languages in US schools. Awardees would be selected by those individual states that wish to participate, according to criteria to be developed by the Department in consultation with others.

B. Proposals requiring no new authority, but increases in funding:

- **Expand opportunities for Seminars and Group Projects Abroad for US educators** (K-12 and higher education, part of the Department's Fulbright-Hays programs administered by OPE), targeting less-common destinations and seeking participating teachers from high-need areas. This year, opportunities exist to organize new seminars in Morocco and Jordan. (About \$150,000 per seminar plus one additional FTE might be required.)
- **Significantly expand "FIPSE-model" consortium programs to stimulate the formation of long-term partnerships between US and other-country postsecondary institutions** for the purposes of faculty collaboration, student exchange, credit recognition, and ultimately developing innovative cross-border curricula in higher education. Three such programs have already been successfully implemented (US-European Union; US-Canada-Mexico; and US-Brazil), and evaluation results are positive. The Department could encourage existing consortia to incorporate new partners in one or two additional countries. Alternatively, the Department could seek partners in other world regions to develop one to three additional consortium programs (staged over a period of years to ensure well-planned implementation); for example, Middle East/North Africa; Latin America; Africa; and/or Asia-Pacific. (A new consortium program might require up to \$1 million per year; incorporating new partners into existing programs would be somewhat less costly.)
- **Support increased funding to districts or schools for K-12 world-language programs, focusing on K-6.** Research shows that language is most easily acquired in the early years and helps cognitive development in other areas, as well. Children in numerous other countries (and in isolated examples in the United States) start learning second languages in the primary grades, and go on to achieve proficiency. While the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) was not included in the President's 2003 budget (Congress funded it at \$14 million for 2002), the new State Grants for Innovative Programs (\$385 million requested in 2003) can be used to support innovative foreign language instruction if states so choose. The Department could seek increased FLAP funding in 2004.
- **Collect data** in order to have baseline information on such international education topics as extent of foreign language and world history study in U.S. schools at all levels; state standards, requirements and policies in this area; and student achievement in subjects such as foreign language and world history. Adding a small number of new questions to existing surveys would be less costly than launching a new survey, but either has cost and staffing implications.

C. Proposals requiring additional authority and funding

- **Seek legislative authority, or build on existing authority, to support international education partnership grants to encourage and support international studies in**

K-12 schools. One option is to build on the existing expertise, and authorized outreach, in programs carried out under Title 6 of the Higher Education Act (HEA); however, in HEA reauthorization, an explicit option for proposals to be submitted jointly by K-12 and higher education partnerships should be included in order to ensure that the needs of K-12 education are explicitly addressed.

Various models should be considered, e.g.:

- K-12 school or district partnerships with postsecondary institutions with significant expertise in international studies (other partners could include community groups, foundations, and/or multinational businesses);
- partnerships between colleges of teacher education, colleges of arts and science, and K-12 schools (recognizing that most US teachers have very limited preservice exposure to international topics); and
- partnerships with other countries (learning from the jointly funded and administered FIPSE consortium programs at the postsecondary level) to co-design and co-fund K-12 partnership grants for international studies.

Authorized activities could include (among others) joint planning; joint curriculum development; student research/internship opportunities; teacher, administrator, and/or student exchanges; classroom-to-classroom project-based collaborations via the Internet; professional development activities and mentoring for teachers; and measuring student learning against agreed-upon objectives for international knowledge and skills. Provision should be made for evaluation of the initiative and its results. The Department would disseminate examples of partnership models that are found to be promising in facilitating the development of international knowledge and skills. New authority may be required; new funding (TBD) would be required.

Complementing this initiative, **planning grants to States** could support and encourage their efforts to define, develop, and implement high-quality international studies programs and strategies in the schools. Such planning grants would greatly increase the chance that the activities of the partnership grant program could lead to the development of international knowledge and skills in US classrooms.

Policy Priority 2. Information Sharing, Leadership, and Joint Initiatives

It is the policy of the U.S. Department of Education to share information about U.S. education policy and practice, provide leadership on education issues in appropriate international forums and settings, and work with appropriate partners in other countries on initiatives of common benefit.

Existing Programs and Activities

The *U.S. Network for Education Information (USNEI)*, housed in the Department of Education, is the official U.S. national education information center on international

student and teacher mobility and degree recognition under the Lisbon Convention,² to which the United States is a party. USNEI is an interagency and public/private network of information and service providers. USNEI advises U.S. federal, state, and local agencies, schools, and parents and students; operates a web site and produces printed information; and represents the United States at international meetings on issues of student and teacher mobility and degree and credit recognition.

The Department's Principal Offices are engaged in ongoing information sharing and engagement in international forums in their areas of expertise. For example, the *Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)* supports international research and dissemination activities that examine and provide leadership on special education and disability issues in an international context. The *Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)* recently organized forums to share experiences with Mexico, Denmark and others.

Further, the Department works with partners in other countries on initiatives that benefit both countries. For example, the *Office of Migrant Education (OME)* works closely with the Secretariat of Public Education in Mexico, and state directors of migrant education in both countries, to develop strategies to improve the education that binational migrant students (i.e., students who migrate between the two countries) receive in the United States and Mexico and to acquaint personnel on both sides of the border with each other's policies and educational issues.

The *Cooperative Civic Education and Economic Education Exchange Program*, administered by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), assists in the development of students' knowledge, skills, and traits of character essential for the preservation and improvement of constitutional democracy in emerging democracies, building on the US experience. Exchanges occurring under this program benefit students and teachers in the United States as well as in other participating countries.

Foreign educational authorities make use of a wide variety of data and publications of the Department's *National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)*. A great deal of data on U.S. education at all levels is made available in print and electronic formats. NCES also cooperates closely with other federal statistical agencies, state agencies, private educational and research organizations, and international organizations. NCES conducts surveys and analyses in the areas of early childhood, elementary, secondary, vocational, postsecondary, and adult education and regularly surveys topics such as school administration, staffing, enrollments, completions, educational outcomes, and policy-related issues such as finance. It conducts the annual National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), longitudinal studies that follow sample cohorts of students across their educational careers, and special studies designed to address current policy issues.

The *International Affairs Staff* in the Office of the Under Secretary (OUS) coordinates Department activities in international education, organizes special international meetings

² Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Pertaining to Higher Education in the European Region

and seminars, and ensures the representation of the United States at education-related conferences and forums overseas. OUS/IA coordinates the Department's bilateral relations, organizes bilateral dialogues such as those under the U.S.-Brazil Partnership for Education, and facilitates the Department's relationship with international organizations. The office also organizes meetings with ED personnel for over 1000 educators, community leaders, journalists and others from abroad each year, as well as arranging meetings of high-level education ministry officials with high-level ED officials. The office produces materials for foreign educators on various aspects of U.S. education, and materials helpful to American educators regarding overseas education systems and opportunities; it responds to inquiries from abroad on a wide range of U.S. education policies, programs, and issues; and it coordinates the Department's participation in International Education Week.

Recent and Already Planned Activities

Some initiatives to enhance information sharing, leadership, and activities of mutual benefit include:

- On September 12, 2002, President Bush announced that the United States would rejoin the *United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)* after an 18-year absence. The Department of Education will work closely with the Department of State, which will resume its lead role in representing the United States to UNESCO, in planning for effective U.S. membership that can further important goals of U.S. education as well as key foreign policy goals of the United States. UNESCO programs and activities such as coordination of the worldwide *Education for All* movement parallel the Administration's education priorities and will benefit from the active involvement of the United States, including its wealth of expertise in education policy, practice, and research.
- The *U.S.-China E-Language Project* is a joint project of the Chinese Ministry of Education and the U.S. Department of Education to develop a web-based language acquisition system, beginning with the instruction of English and Chinese. A 24-member panel of experts (12 U.S., 12 Chinese) including university and private-sector representatives has been formed to develop the system. The E-Language Learning System (ELLS) could be expanded to promote increased knowledge of other world languages. The system also would allow learning from any location, thus increasing students' access to second-language instruction and supporting the NCLB priority of increasing English-language learning by America's limited English proficient populations.
- The Department is working with partner economies in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) to develop the *Asia-Pacific Network for Education web portal* – a mechanism to improve education by better sharing information among teachers, students and policy makers around the Pacific Rim. The web portal will enable participating APEC members to share best practices and educational resources; engage students and teachers in active, joint standards-based learning

projects; and facilitate studying and teaching around the Pacific Rim. The portal is being coordinated through the APEC Cyber Education Cooperative (ACEC) and supported by the APEC Education Foundation (AEF).

- *A New Vision of Citizenship: A US-UK Dialogue on Engaging Young People in their Communities.* The U.S. Department of Education, the U.K. Department for Education and Skills, the British Embassy, and the British Council will jointly organize a binational dialogue for approximately 75 U.S. and U.K. policy makers and educators during International Education Week in November. The goal of the dialogue is to share current approaches by K-12 school-based programs to help students learn to contribute to their community and participate in a democratic, multicultural and global society, and reflect on a new vision of citizenship.
- The *Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools* sponsored an international seminar in 2002 on helping schools prepare for and cope with emergencies, including possible terrorist acts, and is continuing to work with international partners in this important policy area.
- *The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)* intends to fund the *International Literacy Institute (ILI)* at the University of Pennsylvania to identify promising technology-based practices in adult basic education within developing countries.
- Within the next months, the *Office of the Under Secretary, International Affairs Staff* will publish *Education in the United States: An Overview*, for foreign audiences.

Possible/Proposed New Initiatives

Proposed new initiatives to enhance information-sharing, leadership, and mutually beneficial programs include the following (potential partners include foreign Ministries of Education, international organizations, US embassies abroad and foreign embassies in Washington, other federal agencies, multilateral development banks, and non-governmental organizations working in the field of education worldwide):

A. Proposals requiring no new authority and little or no additional funding

- **Create a new state-of-the-art Internet home page offering access to the Department's international activities**, to assist educators, policymakers, and the general public to access international education information, link to the home pages of each of ED's major international programs and initiatives, and provide significantly expanded comparative and international education practice information. The working URL should be www.ed.gov/international. This home page would be based on international content on existing Department sites, and would require modest additional funds.

- ***New Policy Dialogues on Education with strategic partners.*** In the past, the most substantive bilateral relationships in which ED has been involved have included organization of “dialogues” in which the two countries bring experts (governmental and nongovernmental) together to address a key policy issue and highlight promising practices. The most notable example has been the seven dialogues organized as part of the U.S.-Brazil Partnership for Education. The concept could be expanded and improved to cover new strategic partners, either bilaterally or in regional or other logical groupings. Initial targets could be (1) Africa; (2) China; (3) Middle East and North Africa; and (4) Countries with comparable education systems that face similar challenges to ours (e.g., Canada, United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand). Existing funding levels are sufficient to organize two dialogues per year.
- (1) The President plans to travel to Africa in 2003 and education is likely to be high on the agenda. The Department of Education could participate in planning and, possibly, engaging in ongoing dialogue with education authorities in several countries in Africa as a result, coordinating closely with the National Security Council, Department of State, and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).
 - (2) The Chinese Ministry of Education, in a high-level meeting with Secretary Paige on May 17, 2002, advocated “regular, high-level meetings” between education officials to discuss topics including educational exchange, educational technology, second-language learning, and others. China’s importance to the United States, and to U.S. education, should not be underestimated; China is the number one sender of foreign students to US colleges and universities, as well as the most populous nation and one of the fastest growing economies in the world.
 - (3) The *Conference on Higher Education in the Arab World* in March 2002 ended with the Department of State proposing ongoing linkages, including with the Department of Education; such linkages could result in the organization of a multilateral dialogue to plan exchange visits, conferences, partnerships, or technical assistance between governments and educational institutions in the U.S. and Middle Eastern and North African nations.
 - (4) Education roundtable of nations with common policy concerns. On foreign policy, education policy, and language issues, U.S. interests frequently coincide with those of some other highly developed nations, such as Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. Regular informal, but high-level, meetings to share policy approaches and promising practices with our peers in those nations could have significant benefits to all. Exploratory talks on such a regular roundtable were undertaken on the sidelines of an OECD meeting in October 2002.

B. Proposing requiring no new authority, but increases in funding

- **Expand mutually beneficial activities with Mexico.** Consider creating or facilitating binational training and development opportunities to prepare teachers, fluent in both English and Spanish, who could help meet the demand for bilingual English-as-a-Second-Language teachers in both countries. Expand Office of Migrant Education activities with Mexico, such as textbook and teacher exchanges and promotion of the “transfer document,” to reach “binational” students other than those qualifying for migrant education services. Conduct joint research on improving educational outcomes for Hispanic students in the United States.
- **Share U.S. expertise in the collection, analysis and reporting of basic education statistics to build capacity for educational reform and improvement in developing countries.** President Bush has joined other G-8 leaders in pledging financial and technical assistance to assist developing countries in meeting the goal of achieving universal primary education by 2015. However, many developing nations lack good information and accountability systems to track progress in enrollments, monitor expenditures, and assess outcomes. ED has been approached by foreign governments as well as by other U.S. government and international agencies to assist in such an effort. ED is in a unique position to support the President’s policy goals by sharing information on how to develop modern education data collection and accountability systems such as those used by NCES and leading states such as Texas, Florida, Mississippi, and Oregon.

Working in partnership with USAID, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the World Bank, private sector IT companies, state education agencies, and possibly other governments such as that of Canada, ED could host one or more international demonstration workshops, assist in arranging internships and training for developing countries’ ministry statistical staff, and/or identify US experts (including state-level and non-governmental experts) to provide technical assistance abroad. U.S. leadership in including and disaggregating data on disadvantaged groups and students with disabilities could be shared.

In addition to statistics, developing countries may be able to benefit from ED’s sharing U.S. expertise on topics such as access and quality, teacher development, and distance learning. Along the same lines, it may be desirable to establish a “bank” of US educators with expertise in particular areas of education policy and facilitate/fund their sharing of knowledge with counterparts overseas, particularly in developing countries. The existing Fulbright Senior Specialist Program at the Department of State might be a vehicle to establish such a “bank.” **Funding for these activities would be expected to come almost entirely from non-ED sources;** however, significant staff time could be required to manage and monitor such a project.

Policy Priority 3. Learn from Abroad to Improve U.S. Education

It is the policy of the U.S. Department of Education to learn about effective practice and comparative performance in other countries in order to help to improve and enhance U.S. education.

Existing Programs and Activities

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) regularly coordinates US participation in development of internationally comparable education statistics and in comparative international surveys of student performance. NCES also cooperates closely with international organizations such as the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), and others in comparative research studies. Major ongoing studies include the Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALL), Civic Education Study (CivEd), Programs for International Student Assessment (PISA), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and other international comparisons. These surveys and related work such as the TIMSS videotape study provide US educators with information they need to understand how US students compare with their international peers, as well as some of the possible explanatory factors behind this performance.

Recent or Planned Activities

- **Cooperation with Singapore in mathematics and science.** On average, U.S. students do not perform well in mathematics as compared with students in some other countries that participate in the Third International Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS and TIMSS-R). Singapore is one of highest-performing countries on these studies. Under a Memorandum of Agreement in education signed on September 9, 2002, the two countries will exchange information and work together in the areas of math and science education. An initial project will examine the experiences and outcomes of U.S. schools that have adopted Singapore's mathematics textbooks. In addition, the Department will facilitate Singapore's interest in studying U.S. science education practice, particularly with respect to "hands-on" classroom techniques and school partnerships with outside organizations to provide science internships and other opportunities for students.

Proposed/Possible New Initiatives

A. Proposal requiring no new authority and little or no additional funding

- Work actively with the **State Department's Educational and Cultural Affairs bureau** to highlight and increase support for, and participation in, **teacher, student, and citizen exchange programs**. According to the State Department, funding for educational and cultural exchanges has declined significantly in real terms over the past two decades, despite the critical importance to America's

future of increasing mutual understanding between our citizens and those of other countries. Further, only a small minority of U.S. postsecondary students study abroad for a semester or more. At the same time, those administering existing student and citizen exchanges sometimes find it difficult to find willing and appropriate U.S. host schools and communities for foreign exchange students and visitors. The Department of Education would be a welcome partner to the State Department in seeking to improve these situations.

B. Proposal requiring no new authority, but increased funding

- Organize **institutes or workshops on current, high-priority policy issue(s)** in the United States designed to bring lessons from countries considered to have promising models; for example, an *institute or workshop on early childhood education* with leading countries in the field like Sweden, Finland, Denmark, France, and Italy.
- Compile and analyze existing **comparative research**, or undertake new comparative research, to seek evidence of improved student outcomes resulting from policies, programs and practices implemented abroad that may inform policy development on current educational challenges in the United States. Examples might include early literacy, early childhood education, mathematics education, science education, second-language acquisition, and teacher preparation.

C. Proposal requiring new authority and funding

- Request authority to invest in **joint research** with other countries concerning areas of mutual policy concern, and/or for study of promising education practices and policies in other countries and communication of this information to American educators. In particular, the **National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)** is interested in developing International Research Initiatives with European Union countries that can take advantage of the collaboration of outstanding researchers from both continents to advance the state of the art in rehabilitation research.

Policy Priority 4: Support U.S. Foreign and Economic Policy

It is the policy of the U.S. Department of Education to support U.S. foreign and economic policy by strengthening educational relationships with other countries and helping to promote U.S. education.

Each of the existing, planned and proposed initiatives described above is, in part, designed to strengthen the U.S. relationship with one or more countries through cooperation in the field of education, and hence to contribute to U.S. foreign policy objectives. Enhanced cooperation with other parts of the federal government, including the Immigration and Naturalization Service, on matters concerning foreign student and

exchange visitor visas, supports the nation's security. In addition, the Department's international programs and activities offer excellent opportunities to promote U.S. education to appropriate and qualified consumers abroad; educational services generate an estimated \$11-\$13 billion for our economy each year in addition to the non-economic benefits derived both by the foreign consumers and by host institutions, communities, and the country as a whole. The Department intends to further consider how its actions may productively support U.S. foreign and economic policy as it moves to implement its new international policy.

Internal Actions to Support the Department's International Policy

In addition to the specific initiatives listed above, the Department's new international role will be further strengthened by the following internal activities:

- The new **ED International Activities Coordinating Group** now provides a forum for sharing information, discussing key emerging issues, and jointly planning the dissemination of information on the Department's international activities. The group now meets quarterly, and will assist the Secretary in defining strategy with respect to international activities.
- A review of the **Department's Strategic Plan** to determine appropriate placement for objectives defined under the Department's new international policy has been requested by the Under Secretary. The International Affairs Staff and the International Activities Coordinating Group will assist in this review. Additional strategic planning will be required to ensure effective implementation of the Department's new international policy.
- **A Speakers' Series on international education** has been initiated by the Office of the Under Secretary, International Affairs Staff, to provide professional development opportunities for ED staff and invited guests. Other appropriate opportunities to build the international expertise of staff and to provide appropriate outreach to the DC-area community should be considered.
- Consider developing an **Annual Report on ED International Programs and Activities**, focusing on results.

Drafted by ED/OUS/International Affairs, 11-19-02 version